

WARREN LOVRIEN

YOU ASKED ME TO JOT DOWN MY EXPERIENCE OF DECEMBER 7 1941 AT PEARL HARBOR.

I STARTED OUT IN SAN DIEGO IN SCHOOL FOR FIELD MUSIC

IN SEPTEMBER 1941 THERE WAS AN OPENING FOR FIELD MUSIC ABOARD THE USS OKLAHOMA. TWO OF US WERE ELIGIBLE. HAMEL AND MYSELF - WARREN LOVREIN. WE FLIPPED A COIN, I WON, AND WENT ABOARD THE USS OKLAHOMA. LATER HAMEL WAS CALLED TO GO ABOARD THE USS ARIZONA. HE WAS KILLED, I WASN'T.

SEPTEMBER - DECEMBER WE WERE AT SEA IN SOUTH PACIFIC, TRAINING FOR WHATEVER MIGHT COME UP. IN DECEMBER WE ALL SAILED INTO PEARL HARBOR, AND LINED UP FOR ADMIRALS INSPECTION.

USS MARYLAND WAS MOST FORWARD SHIP TIED UP TO THE KEYS, FORT ISLAND. USS OKLAHOMA WAS TIED OUTBOARD OF THE MARYLAND. TENNESSEE INBOARD, WEST VIRGINIA OUTBOARD, ARIZONA INBOARD VESTAL OUTBOARD.

ON SUNDAY MORNING, DECEMBER 7, I WAS DOWN IN THE HEAD (REST ROOMS) WASHING PISTOL BELTS WHEN A CALL CAME OUT FOR GENERAL QUARTERS

NOT MANY BELIEVED IT. AFTER ALL WE WERE IN PORT SO I'M AFRAID WE MOVED RATHER SLOWLY.

THE MARINE CORPORAL OF THE GUARD CAME DOWN, FACE AS WHITE AS A SHEET. GET OUT THE JAPS ARE HERE. I CLIMBED THE LADDER TO MY BATTLE STATION; IN AFTER MAST, CROWS NEST IF YOU WILL. AS WE APPROACHED THE HATCH TO THE TOP WHERE MACHINE GUNS WERE, WE NOTICED IT WAS PADLOCKED. WHO HAS THE KEY? CAPTAINS ORDERLY. WHERE IS HE? DON'T KNOW.

WE COULD FEEL THE SHIP GROAN AS IT WAS HIT BY TORPEDOES. THE SHIP BEGAN TO LIST BADLY.

THE CALL CAME TO ABANDON SHIP. I CLIMBED DOWN AND OVER THE SIDE, WAS WORKING MY WAY OVER TO THE MARYLAND ON HAWSERS (LINES TYING SHIPS TOGETHER). I GOT ABOUT HALF WAY ACROSS AND FOUND MYSELF FALLING INTO THE WATER. SOMEONE HAD TAKEN ON AN AX AND CUT THAT LINE SO THE OKLAHOMA WOULD FALL OUTBOARD AND NOT TO DAMAGE THE MARYLAND. I PADDLED AROUND FOR A WHILE, SOMEONE HANDED ME AN OAR, SO I WAS PULLED UP INTO A DINGEY AND ON UP TO THE MARYLAND WHERE I WENT BELOW DECKS AND PASSED UP AMMUNITION. I REMEMBER WE WERE PRETTY THIRSTY BUT NO WATER AROUND, ONLY BLACK COFFEE.

AFTER THINGS QUIETED DOWN WE WENT TOPSIDE AND WATCHED TWO EMERGENCY VEHICLES COLLIDE ON FORD ISLAND. EVERYONE JUMPED OUT AND UPRIGHTED THE VEHICLES AND OFF THEY WENT. AS NIGHTFALL CAME, WE WERE ISSUED COTS AND TOLD TO SLEEP IN A HANGER. NO BEDDING. ONLY HAD CARDBOARD TO COVER WITH.

EVERY ONCE IN A WHILE WE WOULD LOOK OUT AND SEE TRACER BULLETS FLY. I UNDERSTAND WE WERE SHOOTING AT OUR OWN PLANES COMING IF FROM THE ENTERPRISE, ETC.

NEXT MORNING, WE WERE LOADED INTO A BOAT TO GO THE MAIN PART OF BASE. THE WATER WAS BLACK WITH OIL. I SAW SEVERAL BODIES IN THE WATER. FIRE FROM THE ARIZONA HAD BURNED DECK OF THE WEST VIRGINIA. A FEW DAYS LATER I WAS SENT TO THE TENNESSEE. I LOOKED ON TOP OF THE LOCKERS AND SAW MY SEABAG. EVERYTHING WAS GONE OUT OF IT BUT AT LEAST I HAD GOTTEN THE BAG BACK. SOME ONE HAD CUT A HOLE IN THE BOTTOM OF THE OKLAHOMA TO GET SOME SAILORS OUT. THAT'S WHERE WE HAD OUR EXTRA GEAR STORED.

THE NEXT DAY THE MARINES WERE SENT TO THE MARINE CORPS BASE WHERE WE WERE TRAINING, EXPECTING THE JAPANESE TO INVADE THE ISLAND AT ANY TIME.

AFTER A MONTH OR SO, I WAS TRANSFERRED TO THE USS WEST VIRGINIA WHERE WE WERE ASSIGNED TO SALVAGE THE SHIP.

AFTER MONTHS OF TIED UP TO DOCKS, THE C.B.s CAME AND WELDED UP THE HOLES IN THE DECK. WE WERE OFF TO THE US AND BREMERTON NAVY YARD FOR A REWORK.

AFTER TEN MONTHS IN BREMERTON, I WAS SENT FURLOUGHED TRANSFER TO SAN DIEGO. FROM THERE TO CAMP PENDLETON FIFTH MARINE DIVISION, THE ONES THAT LATER HIT IWO JIMA. WORD WAS PASSED THAT THEY NEEDED VOLUNTEERS TO GO TO V -12 PROGRAM. WHAT'S THAT? TWO YEARS COLLEGE THEN TO OFFICERS SCHOOL. YOU WOULD BE ABLE TO GET A COMMISSION IN THE NAVY OR MARINE CORPS.

I WAS CHOSEN TO GO TO CAMP LE JUNE, NORTH CAROLINA, FOR FURTHER SCREENING. AFTER THAT I COULD PICK ANY OF THIRTEEN COLLEGES. I PICKED U.S.C. AND WAS THERE WHEN THE WAR ENDED.

I SUPPOSE THIS WILL BE MORE THAN YOU NEED, SO PICK OUT THE ITEMS THAT YOU WANT TO USE

SINCERELY

s WARREN G LOVRIEN